REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kakiuchi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,687,017), and further in view of Natsudaira et al. (US 5,740,514).

Summary of Response to the Office Action

Applicants have amended the independent claims 1-3, 6-8 and 11, and dependent claims 4 and 9 to further define the invention and have added new claims 12-19. Accordingly, claims 1-19 are presently pending.

Drawings

Applicants respectfully request acknowledgement of the formal drawings filed on April 26, 2001, because the Office Action does not indicate whether the formal drawings are accepted or objected to by the Examiner.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

Rejection of Claim 1-11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

In the Office Action, claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kakiuchi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,687,017), and further in view of Natsudaira et al. (US 5,740,514). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections as being based upon prior art references, either taken singly or combined, that neither teach nor suggest the features of independent claims 1-3, 6-8, and 11, hence dependent claims 4-5 and 9-10.

According to the Office Action, Kakiuchi et al. allegedly discloses at least one recognition part that is provided corresponding to the rendering object (i.e., counterfeit image data), and recognizes whether a specific image is included in the image data (col. 9, lines 30-40. FIG. 1, item 201); and a determination part that determines based upon the result of recognition

by one or plural recognition units whether the specific image is included in the image data (col. 9, lines 54-64). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Independent claims 1-3, as amended, all recite an image processor including, in part, "a function for recognizing a specific image in image data, regardless the types of one or plural rendering objects making up the image data." Similarly, independent claims 6-8, as amended, all recite an image processing method including, in part, "recognizing a specific image in image data, regardless the types of one or plural rendering objects making up the image data." Furthermore, independent claim 11, as amended, recites a computer-readable storage medium including, in part, "recognizing a specific image in image data, regardless the types of one or plural rendering objects making up the image data." Applicants respectfully submit that at least these features recited by amended independent claims 1-3, 6-8, and 11, and dependent claims 4-5 and 9-10 are neither taught nor suggested by Kakiuchi et al. and Natsudaira et al., whether taken singly or combined.

In contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, Kakiuchi et al. teaches at col. 10, line 54 to col. 11, line 4, col. 11 lines 28-42, and col. 12, line 50 to col. 13, line 10, a printing system using a printer equipped with an image recognition unit which performs the "pre-screening" of a color gray bit map image prior to processing other types of image data. However, as depicted in FIGs. 1, 7, and 8, and stated in the amended independent claims 1-3, 6-8, and 11, the present invention does not target a specific color image from the other types of input image data, and is not adapted to allow a priority image processing on any input image data amongst themselves.

MPEP § 2143.03 instructs that "[to] establish prima facie obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. In re Royka, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974)." Accordingly, because the applied art does not teach or suggest **all the limitations**, or teach or suggest rationale to modify the applied art, Applicant respectfully asserts that the Office Action has not established a prima facie case of obviousness. In addition, Applicants assert that the Office Action does not rely on Natsudaira et al. to remedy the deficiencies of Kakiuchi et al. Moreover, Applicants respectfully assert that Natsudaira et al. cannot remedy the deficiencies of Kakiuchi et al.

Thus, for at least the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-11 are neither taught nor suggested by the applied prior art reference. Applicants respectfully assert that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn because the above-discussed novel combinations of features are neither taught nor suggested by the applied reference, whether taken singly or combined.

New Claims 12-19

Applicant has added new claims 12-19. Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 12-19 recite the function and method claims of the current invention. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests consideration of newly added claims 12-19.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application, withdrawal of all rejections, and the timely allowance of all pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.R.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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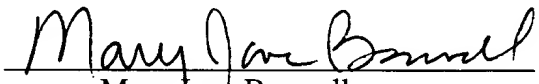
By: 
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